

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

REPORT

INFORMATION REPORT

CD

COUNTRY East Germany

DATE DISTR 18 March 1954

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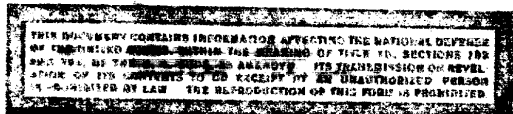
SUBJECT Public Health and Disease Control in East Germany NO. OF PAGES 2

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THIS IS UNEVALUATED INFORMATION

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1. Public Health in the DDR has been organized on the Soviet pattern and strong centralization is enforced. Hygiene inspection has been set up as a Main Section in the Health Ministry. The actual work is done by the Bezirk Hygiene Institutes which are subordinate to the Bezirk governmental administrative units. Such institutes are located as follows:
 - a. Wernigerode, Dessau, Magdeburg (with an annex at Stendal) and Halle for the area formerly known as Land Saxony-Anhalt.
 - b. Dresden, Leipzig, Chemnitz, Zwickau and Bautzen for the area formerly known as Land Saxony.
 - c. Schwerin, Rostock, Greifswald (with an annex in Stralsund) and Neustrelitz for the area formerly known as Land Mecklenburg.
 - d. Potsdam, Brandenburg, Cottbus, Iberswalde and Frankfurt/Oder for the area formerly known as Land Thuringia.
2. Each individual Hygiene Institute is directed by a physician and is divided into three sections:
 - a. Medical Section which performs clinical, serological and bacteriological tests.
 - b. Chemical Section which supervises sanitation of food products.
 - c. Public Health Section which enforces disease control regulations in professional, business and industrial organizations and watches general local health conditions. For this purpose the Section has approximately 21 public health inspectors at its disposal.
3. The general disease situation in the DDR is, essentially, almost normal although a serious epidemic of spinal poliomyelitis occurred in mid-August 1953. The epidemic was most severe in Saxony. The East Zone press had played up the outbreak of influenza in West Germany, the typhoid cases in Stuttgart and the poliomyelitis in the United States as consequences of Capitalistic mismanagement and decay. When poliomyelitis broke out in the DDR it was necessary to censor the press which could not, therefore, give some factual explanation to the population. Discussions

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concerning possible postponement of the Leipzig Trade Fair, as a health security measure, dragged on for 14 days but yielded to political expediency. The risk of holding the Fair at the usual time was taken contrary to all medical advice.

1 Comment. The Bezirk Hygiene Institute (Bezirk-Hygieneinstitut) was formerly known as the Zentralstelle fuer Hygiene (Central Hygiene Station).

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